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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PARAMARIBO 000463

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STATE FOR PM/DTCC - BLUE LANTERN COORDINATOR: RVALERIN,
WHA/CAR: LLUFTIG

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ETTC](#) [KOMC](#) [NS](#)

SUBJECT: BLUE LANTERN LEVEL 3: PRE-LICENSE END-USE CHECK ON
APPLICATION 05-1000496, SEMI-AUTOMATIC PISTOLS

REF: STATE 105194

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1. Embassy staff visited the Shooting Club of Suriname located at Molenpad 73, Paramaribo, Suriname to conduct the requested site visit (reftel). Per conversation with Mr. Roland Tjin Wong Joe manager/consignee on July 12, Embassy submits responses to questions posed by the Blue Lantern Coordinator for consideration, which follow below. We note, however, that while the manager has all required permits and is not reselling the weapons (Glock, Sauer, and Ruger semi-automatic pistols), his shooting club effectively engages in an off-site rental arrangement with minimal controls. While this is legal under Surinamese law, we understand that the Attorney General of Suriname as well as police officials find the practice troubling, and intend to seek legislation to strengthen controls on the practice. We share Surinamese law enforcement's reservations about the arrangements. While they may fulfill the literal end-use requirements, in practice they do not meet the spirit of controlling end use.

2. Response to questionnaire:

a) When was the company established and who are its principals?

- The Shooting Club of Suriname was established on November 15, 1966. Mr. Tjin Wong Joe has been the manager/chairman of the organization for the past 16 years.

b) Who are the firm's typical customers and where are they located?

- The "customers" are members of the Shooting Club of Suriname. While they are meant to be the exclusive users of the weapons, and the club's rules specify there should be no resale of items, it is not clear to us how further usage is controlled once the weapons are checked out from the club (see response c below). Per Mr. Tjin Wong Joe, members go through a probationary period of six months and must be nominated by two current members. After a six-month waiting period the board decides on final admittance of a member. These members are located primarily in the capital city Paramaribo, and neighboring districts, Wanica, Para and Saramacca. The club requires no police checks for membership.

c) Does the company have an established, legitimate customer base to which it plans to sell these commodities?

- The Shooting Club of Suriname does not sell the weapons to its members. The members pay a fee for use. While the

shooting club retains ownership of the weapons, it loans them to members for "sporting purposes." The members store the weapons at their own premises.

d) Does the company have adequate on-site security?

Mr. Tjin Wong Joe's building has a security system and he stores unused weapons in a safe. His on-site inventory is low, as members retain possession of the borrowed guns for as long as they are in good standing. However, when a members go abroad they are obliged to store their weapon(s) at the shooting club. Members are also advised to keep unloaded weapons locked in a secure space. It is not clear how these requirements are enforced.

The Attorney General of Suriname and Surinamese police officials believe those arrangements carry insufficient safeguards, and want to require individual members to file for a weapons permit for the weapon they desire to check out from the club. This will require a change to existing Surinamese law. This proposed change would put the responsibility on the member as opposed to the club. The Embassy agrees that lax membership requirements and the ability of members to take the weapons home, while permitted under Surinamese law, introduce a considerable range of uncertainty about the conditions in which the weapons are stored and used. The police would like to see the law further revised to require all shooting clubs to have adequate weapons storage on site, and that members shoot only at the club.

e) Does the company keep proper, detailed records of its sales and customers?

- The company is obliged to keep records of all weapons in use by its members per local law, and does keep an updated log of all weapons in use by the members, and reports this

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data to the Attorney General. Registered in the logs are the names of the customers, and the registration numbers of the weapons. The Attorney General has the right to spot check the records at any time. To date there have been no known misuse or violations of Surinamese law by members of the club.

f) Does the company understand the restrictions of USML articles, particularly regarding re-exporting?

- The Shooting Club of Suriname understands the USML restrictions and does not intend to re-export.

g) Does the company have the proper firearms license and import permits for the items listed on the license application?

- Yes

h) In post's assessment, is the company a reliable recipient of the USML items?

- Mr. Tjin Wong Joe has been importing weapons for 16 years for Shooting Club Paramaribo. While admittedly we are aware of no untoward incidents connected to members, and his activities are legal under current Surinamese code, we believe that the club's loan arrangements provide insufficient safeguards for us to assert that the ultimate recipients of the USML items are reliable.

BARNES